



**Pre-Screening Notification in respect of Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communications Strategy**

**The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 ("the Act")**

Aberdeenshire Council is preparing a strategy entitled Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communications Strategy. Briefly, the strategy seeks to guide the council to ensure that they listen to the needs of their employees, local communities and partners and send out a message, using the right medium and in appropriate language, to all those who need to receive it. It will also provide a range of channels for people to tell the Council how they are doing and help to guide the direction of the council. The PPS relates to the whole of Aberdeenshire.

By virtue of Section 7(2) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Aberdeenshire Council has applied the criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Act to the PPS on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of November 2007. Aberdeenshire Council is of the opinion that the Strategy will have no effect in relation to the environment.

Pursuant to Section 7(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Aberdeenshire Council hereby notifies the consultation authorities of that fact. Appendix 1 below shows how the criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Act have been applied to the PPS to reach this opinion.

Signed K Bond

6<sup>th</sup> November 2007

Head of Corporate Communications

## Appendix 1

### SEA PRE-SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)

#### PART 1

To: [SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

or

SEA Gateway  
Scottish Executive  
Area 1 H (Bridge)  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

#### PART 2

An SEA Screening Report is attached for the plan, programme or strategy (PPS) entitled:

Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communication Strategy

The Responsible Authority is:

Aberdeenshire Council

COMPLETE PART 3 or 4 or 5

**PART 3**

Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our view is that:

**an SEA is required** because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(3) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects or

**an SEA is required** because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(4) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects or

**an SEA is not required** because the PPS is unlikely to have significant environmental effects

**PART 4**

The PPS does not require an SEA under the Act. However, we wish to carry out an SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that, because this SEA is voluntary, the statutory 28 day timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

**PART 5**

None of the above apply. We have prepared this screening report because:

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**SEA PRE-SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)**

**PART 6**

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**PART 7**

<b>Signature</b> (electronic signature is acceptable)	Kate Bond
<b>Date</b>	6 November 2007

## SEA PRE-SCREENING REPORT - KEY FACTS

<b>Responsible Authority</b>	Aberdeenshire Council
<b>Title of PPS</b>	Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communication Strategy
<b>Purpose of PPS</b>	The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the employees and councillors of Aberdeenshire Council understand and share their vision; ensure their stakeholders feel they have a voice in shaping local services and communities; encourage their partners to work with us to deliver this ambitious agenda
<b>What prompted the PPS</b> (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	Administrative requirements
<b>Subject</b> (e.g. transport)	Communication
<b>Period covered by PPS</b>	2007-2010
<b>Frequency of updates</b>	As and when required
<b>Area covered by PPS</b> (e.g. geographical area – it is good practice to attach a map)	The whole of Aberdeenshire
<b>Summary of nature/content of PPS</b>	It covers the vision, informing strategy, delivery strategy, target audiences, brand and image, communicating with residents, corporate publications, marketing the Council's Services, Communication with opinion formers, e-communication, communicating with employees, communicating with media, communicating with councillors, communicating in crisis, consultation, the team, benchmarking and measuring performance
<b>Are there any proposed PPS objectives?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<b>Copy of objectives attached</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<b>Date</b>	6 November 2007

## SEA PRE-SCREENING REPORT

Our determinations regarding the likely significance of effects on the environment of Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communication Strategy is set out in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 – LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

<b>TITLE OF PPS:</b> Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communication Strategy		
<b>RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:</b> Aberdeenshire Council		
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?  YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
1(a) the degree to which the PPS sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	It sets no framework for projects and other activities. It deals with communication strategy with various audiences
1(b) the degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in a hierarchy	No	It does not set a framework for other PPS
1(c) the relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	It does not address environmental or sustainability issues
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(d) etc. refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects  YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)

1(d) environmental problems relevant to the PPS	No	There are no known environmental problems relevant to this policy
1(e) the relevance of the PPS for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, PPS linked to waste management or water protection)	No	The policy does not affect or is affected by any Community legislation on the environment.
2 (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	No effects
2 (b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	No perceived cumulative effects
2 (c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)	No	No transboundary effect
2 (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	No	There are no discernible risks associated with the implementation of this policy
<b>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</b> (2(e), 2(f) etc refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	<b>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</b>  <b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</b>
2 (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	No effect

<p><b>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</b>  (2(e), 2(f) etc refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)</p>	<p><b>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</b>   <b>YES/NO</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</b></p>
<p>2 (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to-  (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;  (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or  (iii) intensive land-use.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No effects on designated and non-designated sites</p>
<p>2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No effects on landscapes</p>



## SEA PRE-SCREENING REPORT

**A summary of our considerations of the significant environmental effects of Aberdeenshire Council Corporate Communication Strategy is given below.**

### TABLE 2 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

*Aberdeenshire Council Communication Strategy* aims to ensure that Aberdeenshire Council listen to the needs of their employees, local communities and partners and send out a message, using the right medium and in appropriate language, to all those who need to receive it. It will also provide a range of channels for people to tell the Council how they are doing and help to guide the direction of the council. It does not set a framework for projects and other PPS. There are no environmental problems relevant to this policy. The policy, which does not affect or is affected by any Community legislation on the environment, has no discernible risks associated with its implementation.

It is the considered opinion of Aberdeenshire Council that this PPS has no effect in relation the environment.

DRAFT

## **ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **Overview of communications**

Good communications is at the heart of every successful organisation. Whether it is engaging with employees, working with partners or telling local taxpayers how their money is spent to deliver important local services, each communication we have reflects on the performance of Aberdeenshire Council.

'Corporate communications' will help to guide the council in making sure that we listen to the needs of our employees, local communities and partners and send out a message, using the right medium and in appropriate language, to all those who need to receive it. It will also provide a range of channels for people to tell us how we're doing and help to guide the on-going direction of the council.

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Ensure that our employees and councillors understand and share our vision
- Ensure our stakeholders feel they have a voice in shaping local services and communities
- Encourage our partners to work with us to deliver this ambitious agenda

The scope of this strategy is therefore:

- Listening and responding to the needs of local communities and other stakeholders
- Using the feedback we receive from our stakeholders, communicate the council's plans, policies and activities in an appropriate way
- Developing effective relationships with the media to help us communicate our message to the wider audience
- The need in a large, complex organisation to have effective, trusted and regular communication with employees
- Engage with employees, using their feedback to shape our service delivery and then communicating how and why the council delivers its policies, plans and activities

- Measuring the performance of the communications team, what does it do well? What must it improve on? How can the team be best placed to deliver an ambitious agenda of communications?

### **High level communications objectives**

- Deliver proactive communications, seek out stories from within services and 'sell' them into the media
- Seek out stories which are about people and places – not plans and policies
- All communications from the council should improve understanding of our services and how to access them
- Promote the role of local councillors
- Put employees at the heart of the drive for improved communications
- Engage with local people so they understand how they are able to influence local decisions
- Embrace a culture of good communications
- Improve access to information for all, especially 'hard to reach' groups
- Use electronic communications as an aid, not a solution